

## TRIBUTE TO RYAN PATTON

**HON. MELISSA A. HART**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and welcome home Ryan Patton from Iraq.

Sergeant Ryan Patton has returned home after spending a year serving his country patrolling the streets of Baghdad. Sergeant Patton was part of the 458 Engineers Unit of the U.S. Army Reserve, and found out he was going to be deployed to Iraq in November 2003. After months of training Sergeant Patton left for Iraq in March 2004. Sergeant Patton left his wife and two young children to defend his country.

Sergeant Patton has returned to his family life, and his old job as the assistant manager at #1 Cochran's Collision Center in Monroeville, Pennsylvania.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring Sergeant Ryan Patton for all of his work and dedication to defending our country. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute such a dedicated soldier like Sergeant Patton.

IN RECOGNITION OF 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF AUBURN UNIVERSITY, AUBURN, ALABAMA

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Auburn University on its Sesquicentennial Celebration. On February 1, 1856, then-Governor of Alabama, John Winston, signed a charter that established the East Alabama Male College, a small, private male liberal arts college. One hundred fifty years later, Auburn University has become one of the pre-eminent research universities in the South, and most certainly one of our state's most proud and cherished institutions of higher learning.

The University was founded on a three-part mission: instruction, research and outreach. Auburn maintains this mission to this day, boasting an enrollment of over 23,000 students and employing a highly talented faculty of over 1,200. Many of its 13 schools are ranked among our nation's best, and its athletic program certainly is cause for celebration for thousands and thousands of fans and alumni every year.

I am honored today to congratulate Auburn University on its first 150 years, and am proud and humbled for the opportunity to represent its students, faculty and administrators here in the House of Representatives. I thank the House for joining me for this important occasion, and wish Auburn all the best in its next 150 years, here in the "loveliest village on the plains." War Eagle!

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF DR. CARMELITA A. THOMAS, PRESIDENT OF TRI-C WEST

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Dr. Carmelita Thomas, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, sister and friend. Dr. Thomas leaves behind a remarkable legacy of leadership, accomplishment and activism on behalf of higher education and throughout our Cleveland community.

Dr. Thomas was born and raised in northern Italy. Her family emigrated to Cleveland when she was a high school senior, yet she quickly overcame the challenges of a new culture and language and graduated with her class from Warrensville Heights High School. With a steady focus on academic achievement, Dr. Thomas earned several bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees from the University of California at Los Angeles. After many years in leadership roles at the Los Angeles Community College District, Dr. Thomas brought her passion, knowledge, expertise and energy to Cleveland, where she served as the President of Cuyahoga Community College, Western Campus, where 12,000 students enroll each semester. Dr. Thomas was respected and admired by colleagues and leaders in both the public and private sectors. Her unwavering focus on improving the College is reflected throughout the Campus. Because of her direction, Tri-C's Western Campus is now a training center for digital technology for visual communication and also includes cutting-edge medical technology used to train health care professionals, such as electroneuro technology and diagnostic sonography.

Dr. Thomas' commitment to others extended beyond the campus of Tri-C. Her boundless energy and commitment to making a positive difference is evidenced within her activism and volunteer service on many local boards and organizations, including her service as a member of the Board of Trustees at St. John Westshore Hospital; the Parma Area Chamber of Commerce; the American Council on Education; and the American Council for International and Intercultural Educational Organizations. Dr. Thomas' personal interests mirrored the passion and energy she committed to her profession, and ranged in scope from travel, to cooking, to the classical arts.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Dr. Carmelita A. Thomas. I offer my deepest condolences to her husband of 45 years, James E. Thomas; to her daughters, Sondra and Sonia; to her sons-in-law, Timothy and Jim; to her grandsons, Jeremy and Bradley; to her brothers and sisters; and to her extended family members and many friends. Her numerous accomplishments, marked by personal and professional integrity, served to make a positive difference in all areas of higher education throughout the Western Campus of Tri-C and throughout our entire community, and she will be remembered always.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO THE ORGANIZATION OF CHINESE AMERICANS

**HON. MELISSA A. HART**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish the membership of the Organization of Chinese Americans a healthy and happy New Year for the year 4704, the year of the Dog.

The New Year is a time for reflection and thanksgiving for the joys of life and loved ones and I am thankful for the richness that this organization brings to my region. Chinese Americans have made great contributions of western Pennsylvania and to our nation as a whole and I am very honored for this opportunity to wish them the best year yet in 4704.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in wishing the members of the organization of Chinese Americans a very happy and prosperous New Year.

IN RECOGNITION OF LAURA STEELE

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 8, 2006*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to pay tribute to Miss Laura Steele, an Auburn University student who recently led an effort to change the University's "Holiday Tree" back to its more traditional name, "Christmas Tree."

In December of 2005, Miss Steele took issue with an attempt to rename the school's traditional tree. In a widely publicized initiative, Steele, a senator-at-large and Chairwoman of the Auburn College of Republicans, introduced a resolution before the Student Government Association calling for the more traditional "Christmas Tree" name to be restored for use at Auburn.

Her campaign gathered hundreds of signatures in support of the effort, and led to more than 20,000 calls of support to student leaders. She garnered the support of our state legislators, Governor Riley, and influential leaders across our state and around the world. I was delighted to see her resolution adopted, and am pleased that next year Auburn's tree will once again be known as its Christmas Tree.

We are indeed proud of Miss Steele. Her efforts to recognize and promote the true meaning of Christmas here at Auburn should serve as a reminder for us all that our belief in the Almighty is one of the core strengths of our nation. I applaud her efforts, and congratulate her for her leadership, her courage, and abiding faith.